



Facilitator's Guide

The facilitator of your Town Hall Meeting plays a critical role in the success of the event. This person must keep the meeting on track and encourage the flow of ideas and discussions among participants. Keep the following points in mind when selecting a facilitator for your Town Hall Meeting.

The Facilitator Should:

- ☐ Know the subject matter well (that is, be knowledgeable on the topic of underage alcohol use).
- ☐ Have strong communication skills, which include speaking and listening well.
- ☐ Be tactful, particularly when faced with controversial questions or disruptions.
- ☐ Decide when to move on to another point or topic and when to allow a discussion to continue.
- ☐ Engage the audience.
- ☐ Encourage audience participation.
- ☐ Keep the meeting focused on the agreed-upon subject.

Once you have identified the facilitator, explain the specific role he or she will play in the success of the Town Hall Meeting. Provide the following checklist to help the facilitator prepare for the meeting.

The Facilitator's Role:

- ☐ Introduce the problem of underage alcohol use and any specific related issues that will be discussed in the meeting.
- ☐ Explain the format (for example, will participants be encouraged to ask questions throughout panel discussions or will they be asked to hold questions and comments until the end?).
- ☐ Introduce panelists.
- ☐ Ask questions of the panelists that will reinforce the importance of preventing underage alcohol use (for example, ask a law enforcement representative about the legal implications of underage alcohol use).
- ☐ Determine the length of time allowed per panelist to answer each question.
- ☐ Have a preset timeframe for the panel discussion.
- ☐ Begin a question and answer (Q&A) period with the other participants, providing a microphone if needed.
- ☐ Have a preset timeframe for the Q&A period.
- ☐ During the Q&A period, take questions from the audience and direct them to the appropriate panelist.
- ☐ Wrap up the meeting by summarizing the key points discussed, identifying next steps, and thanking panelists and audience members for their participation.
- ☐ Facilitate interviews between the media and the panelists or other spokespersons. Some of these interviews may occur before the meeting.
- ☐ Have a preset timeframe for media interviews.